

File Security/Espionage Act

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Washington 25, D. C.

606
Espionage Act

14 October 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ADAMS

The President has approved a suggestion made by Mr. Lovett to the effect that we should propose legislation designed to put teeth in breaches of security. What he has in mind specifically is that if we catch someone passing on classified information to an intermediary for, say, a newspaper columnist, we should be able to proceed criminally and promptly against all four -- the employee, the intermediary, the columnist and the newspaper. He thinks that our laws are difficult now in that we must show treasonable intent and cannot take a person into custody until he has been convicted. His thinking is not confined to breaches of security, but would extend to acts which aid the enemy. He has in mind that maybe the British Defense of the Realm Acts may be along the lines he desires. He thinks Forrestal made an attempt to draft such legislation, and probably Marx Leva did the drafting for him.

It looks as if this might require considerable research to collect an adequate background, but I think Mr. Kent is familiar with our present laws in general, since he and the Army JAG had occasion to look into them recently. I don't know whether you will need the help of one or more members of Nate's staff, but if so, I will see if we can pry them loose. I would think it likely that the Army and maybe the other two JAG's would be of material help.

/s/ C.A.C.

Charles A. Coolidge

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